

Donors help seminarian with both love and money

FORT WORTH, Texas — This is the story of the Southwestern Seminary donor who gave a student both love and money.

Through the help of Joseph and Kathryn Oliver of Amory, Miss., Rana Nettles Burt received financial aid and met her husband-to-be. She and Bobby Burt, the associate pastor at the Olivers' church, were married in December.

It all started when the Olivers established a scholarship fund for seminary students with the Baptist Foundation of Mississippi in 1980.

Oliver, a retired director of associational missions, recalled his own financial struggle to get through seminary and wanted to help others who might have the same need.

The Olivers arrived at Southwestern in the spring of 1941 with \$5.85 between them. He borrowed money from the business manager to pay the first month's rent. For the next four years he worked several jobs at one time while going to school.

"If I had had some financial

help, I could have spent more time studying, and my seminary days would have meant more to my ministry," Oliver said in a 1984 story in the Baptist Record.

Now the Olivers enjoy receiving letters from students who have been helped by the scholarships. One such letter in the fall of 1986 came from Mrs. Burt, who is from Starkville, Miss., just an hour away from Amory.

Mrs. Burt determined she would visit the Olivers over the Christmas break to express her ap-

preciation for the scholarship. When she got there, Mrs. Oliver had arranged for her to meet Burt.

The two corresponded through the spring semester, visited one another in the summer and became engaged last September. They were married at the Olivers' church, Cason Baptist in Nettleton, Miss.

Both have returned to Southwestern as students.

And the Olivers rest in the satisfaction of supporting a student and making a match.



Bobby and Rana Burt

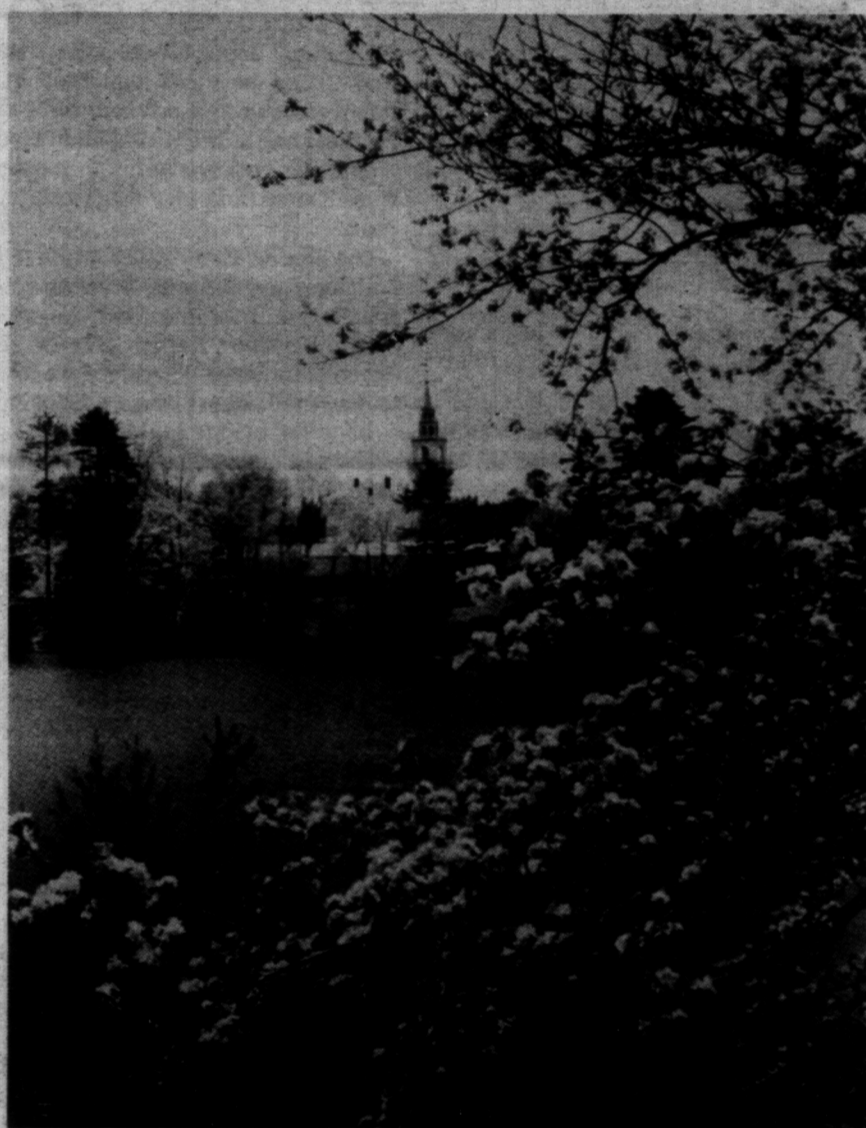


The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, March 17, 1988

Published Since 1877



In Bangladesh

After flood, \$500 house looks like pot of gold at rainbow's end

By Anne McWilliams

The houses measure 11 x 17 feet; they cost \$500 each. For 1,000 families, thanks to Southern Baptists, they will mean shelter from the sun and the rain.

Two missionaries from Mississippi are overseeing the building of them in Bangladesh. R. T. Buckley from his home at Feni and Tom Thurman from Gopalganj. Money for the houses comes from the disaster relief fund of the Foreign Mission Board, SBC.

Since a major flood in Bangladesh last July took the lives of at least 1,500, and left thousands homeless, Buckley and his crews have built 200 houses. During February and early March, 1988, he was in Mississippi, but he returned last week to Feni, to begin the building of another 300. During February, Thurman began the building of 500 houses in his area.

Buckley said contracts are let for the work. He has employed a Bengali supervisor and five construction crews.

"They could use 25,000 houses, and we are only building 500," he said. "It's hard to decide who will get the 500

houses, so we let the government decide. Government representatives select sites, but the Baptist Mission can reject their selection."

First, the government checks to see if the family actually owns the land where the house is to be built. If it were owned by someone else, the owner might come forward and claim the house. Second, the government checks to find out if the family actually lived in a house destroyed in the flood, for that is another requirement. Third, the government asks the family to help in construction of the house.

"Pure relief can be detrimental," Buckley said, "so that's why the families are asked to help — to maintain their self-respect."

Not only must the owner of the house work along with the construction workers, but he must be responsible for all the earthwork for the floors, Buckley pointed out, and he must transport building supplies from a drop-off site to the place where the building is going up. "That might be two or three miles," the missionary added, and several members of the

family, including wife and children, might make many trips, perhaps on foot, to move the supplies."

R. T. and Fran Buckley were appointed as missionaries in 1967. In 21 years since (two in Belgium and 18 in Bangladesh) this was the fourth or fifth major flood they've seen. (The building project is only one of his varied responsibilities with the Mission.)

"This project not only helps the people," he said. "It also helps the missionaries. It gives us an opportunity to show our Christian concern. It helps the missionary image, while it helps to meet a real need."

After the flood last year, the government contacted the Mission and wanted to know if the Southern Baptists could help, for they remembered their help after other floods.

As Buckley observed, "It shows that Southern Baptists have an image of caring for people, not only in preaching and establishing churches, but in caring for the people's physical needs as well."

The redbud tree

Oh, redbud tree, with your limbs held high,
It looks like you're trying to touch the sky.
I think you're a show-off; you want folks to see
Just how beautiful you can be.

Each day you have more blooms to show
And each of them prettier than you know.
The bumblebees know you are proud and so
They buzz like crazy down below.

Spring will soon come, and the long dormant earth
Will blossom and flourish for nature's rebirth.
But for now I am happy that I can see
The elegant beauty of the redbud tree!

—Ruth N. Crager
State Line

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

ACTS grows fastest in nation

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The ACTS Satellite Network has been reported by Cablevision Magazine to be the fastest growing religious network in the nation.

Cablevision, which compiles annual statistics on all program services distributed via cable, said ACTS grew by 28.6 percent in 1987. The magazine reported ACTS had contracts with 245 cable systems nationwide with 6.3 million subscribing households. That represents a 1.4 million increase in cable homes during the year. Using the A.C. Nielsen Co. estimate of 2.7 members per household, the potential

cable audience for ACTS programs would be more than 17 million people.

The second fastest growing Christian network according to Cablevision was Eternal Word Television Network with a 16.4 percent increase. EWTN is aimed primarily at a Roman Catholic audience.

Among other Christian networks showing some growth in 1987 were Trinity Broadcasting Network, 10.2 percent, and CBN Cable Network, 9.2 percent. The Inspirational Network, formerly PTL, showed a 30 percent decline in number of cable households

during the year. Evangelist Jerry Falwell's Liberty Broadcasting Network, with 1.049 million cable households, fell by 19.3 percent according to the survey.

ACTS began service in June 1984. It features a mixture of family oriented entertainment and religious programs produced by Baptists and other mainline denominations. "Christian programs which do not ask for money for themselves on the air is one answer to some of the excesses surrounding television broadcasters being reported," Commission president Jimmy Allen said.

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

Bridges of peace

The Baptist Record is completing this week a two-part presentation of the statement titled "A Conservative Southern Baptist Affirmation" that was delivered by Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian Rogers during a press conference immediately following the recent SBC Executive Committee meeting.

Rogers was the principal spokesman at the conference, which was held at the SBC building in Nashville. Others involved were two past presidents, Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, and Bailey Smith, an evangelist based in Atlanta, Ga.

Charles Stanley, pastor of First Church, Atlanta, and the immediate past president, was to have been there, but he was not able to make it.

These are the four presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention since 1979. The line was drawn sharply at that point. In response to questioning, Rogers responded that it was because the three who were there and the one who wasn't have similar philosophical bases.

Appreciation would have to be expressed for this statement of position. For the most part, it is a position with which almost all Southern Baptists could agree. One prominent exception was the affirmation of "doctrinal unity in functional diversity."

This is a new play on the old Baptist slogan of unity in diversity. In earlier days there were no adjectives added. The problem with doctrinal unity is that in order to achieve that, some one finally has to make the decision on what the doctrine is to be. We could say that we simply would follow

scripture, but then everyone would have to interpret scripture the same way. Baptists have always recognized some amount of diversity in this respect.

Thus we have maintained that we were unified in purpose even though we might be somewhat diverse in scripture interpretation.

Be that as it may, Rogers did not claim to speak for all Southern Baptists, and there was an attendant claim that no one else speaks for the four presidents represented in the conference. A question was whether or not this was an attempt to distance the four from the Paige Patterson-Paul Pressler coalition. The answer was that there was no such attempt, but Rogers noted that he was more interested in the "written page" and the "Apostle Paul" than he was in the two mentioned.

In an oral statement in addition to the written one, Rogers noted that the four presidents had been said to be in favor of mandated prayer in public schools. "We're not even in favor of mandated prayer in Sunday School," he declared.

The written statement notes that a prayerful desire "is for the institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention to work and teach in accord with The Baptist Faith and Message, especially concerning the article on 'The Scriptures.'"

In response to a question as to whether or not there are teachers conducting their class work contrary to The Baptist Faith and Message, Rogers said that there were. He said that the Peace Committee had the records of such. The Peace Commit-

tee, however, in its report which was adopted by a 95 percent vote at the St. Louis Convention, pointed out divergencies in the four areas that are being held out as tenets held by most Southern Baptists. The committee report noted that "The Peace Committee is working earnestly to find ways to build bridges between those holding divergent views so that we may all legitimately coexist and work together in harmony to accomplish our common mission. Please pray that we may find ways to use our diversity to win the greatest number to faith in Christ as Savior and Lord."

The four areas are the direct creation and historicity of Adam and Eve, belief in the stated authorship of the books of the Bible, belief that the miracles actually occurred, and belief that the narratives of the Bible are true.

The Peace Committee report also noted, "We will foster in our classrooms a balanced scholarly frame of reference for presenting fairly the entire spectrum of scriptural interpretations represented by our constituencies. We perceive this to be both good education and good cooperation."

While Rogers declared that the Peace Committee had records of professors teaching contrary to The Baptist Faith and Message, he failed to name them during the conference. The Peace Committee records have been sealed, by vote of the committee, for the next 10 years.

Rogers continues to insist that the Peace Committee report is now the convention report, and that is correct. The Peace Committee report, however, was all about building

bridges.

Rogers mentioned that he is thinking about publishing the statement of conservative confirmation in booklet form. The news conference also was audio taped and video taped at Rogers' request for future use. These things give the conference an atmosphere of officiality.

New elements continue to be added for one to be a "true" Southern Baptist.

Perhaps we need to look once again at what a Southern Baptist is. The convention constitution says that the purpose of the convention is "to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad and any other projects such as Christian

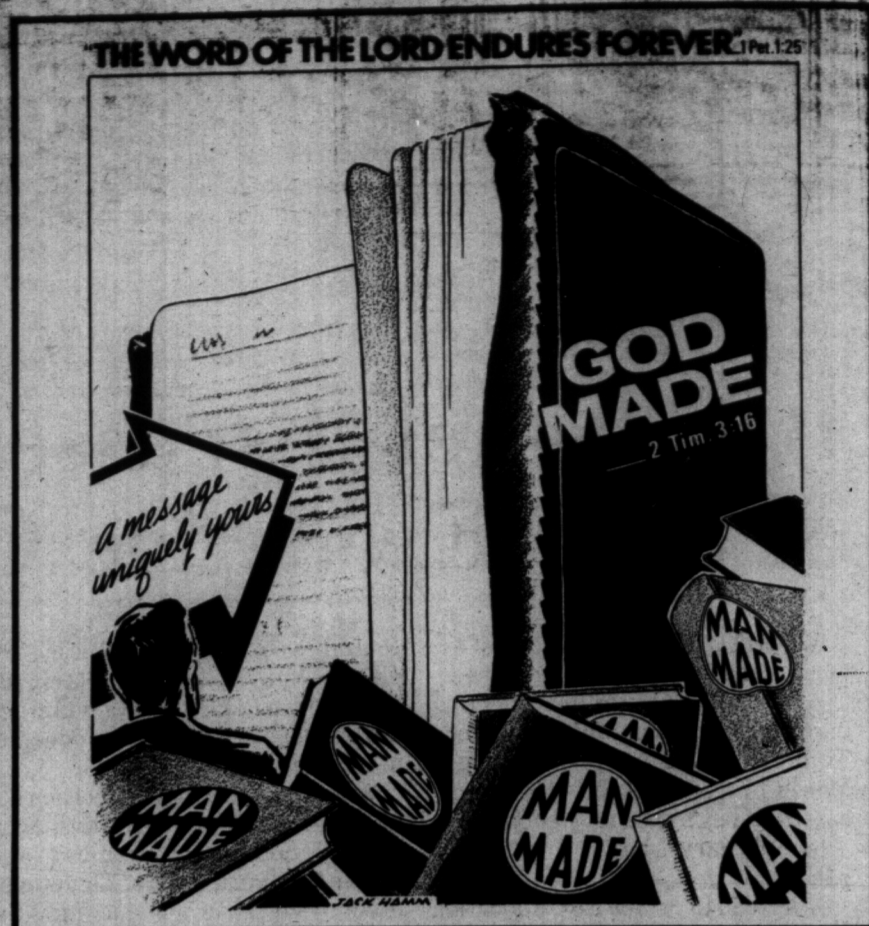
education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God."

The convention is a missions operation. Everything else must relate to that.

The Peace Committee wanted to build bridges. We must give the committee credit for that, and we must remember that Rogers was on the Peace Committee. Therefore, we must realize that Rogers was a part of early hope for bridge building.

The sad fact is, however, that there have been no foundations for bridges built from either side of the chasm. Perhaps Rogers was trying to lay a foundation. But it almost appears that it will take a creed to halt the conflict. And we are not a creedal people.

It is very sad.



Guest opinion . . .

The war on litter

By James L. Watts

For 20 years I have studied solid waste disposal. We can lead Mississippi Baptists to greatly reduce the worst physical problem facing god's creation in his Mississippi. His people have accomplished it in several states.

In lieu of the litter details, I urge proclamation-parties telling the Good News; The gospel of Christ to unchurched groups and individuals to include one-on-one witnessing.

The removal of litter from the highways and byways would beautify God's Magnolia state. Putting the bagged litter in garbage dumps and/or landfills merely piles up the solid waste. It does not dispose (eliminate) it. Many states have run out of landfills. The one at Brandon is causing a stream pollution problem.

The ultimate goal is to eliminate, or

prevent solid waste recycling everything. The writer generates about one gallon of solid waste per week consisting of dirty aluminum foil and colored glass. That could be eliminated. About one-half of litter (solid waste) can easily be prevented by requiring the 5-or 10-cent deposit on all beverage containers, glass, aluminum, plastic, etc. called "The Bottle Bill." Such legislation is not only financially neutral — it is positive. The unredeemed deposit money could go to the state. Some states do it now!

Can Mississippi Baptists accomplish the above panacea? "The difficult immediately; the impossible takes a little longer." Many towns already have recycling centers. Renewed Resources Recycling, Inc. has a center at 107 Highway 80 East,

Pearl, Miss., phone 932-5847.

Action: Individual Baptists working through local churches and/or county associations contact the governor, representatives, senators, and county supervisors urging and entreating enactment of "The Bottle Bill" and directing the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol and county sheriffs to apprehend violators of the state litter law. The paying of fines and/or picking up litter will get the message out faster than the five o'clock news!

Many Southern Baptists greatly misunderstand "separation of church and state" and consequently refuse to get involved in governmental affairs. "All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing." After listening to Dr. D. James Kennedy, Coral Ridge Ministries, Fort

Lauderdale, Fla., for several years, I recognize him as an authority on this subject. He implores Christians to get involved in government. Our R. Keith Parks seeks cooperation with other Christian denominations in carrying out the Great Commission. Likewise, we would do well to seek help from Presbyterian and other Christian denominations in Our Godly Mission.

Maybe one wonders to what am I referring in "Our Godly Mission." Let me assure you that I consider the best possible solution to solid waste problem to be a Godly Mission. It caused me to work free of charge for a year with the Jackson Recycling Center. Since retirement in 1958 I have not put a piece of clear glass in garbage dumps or landfills. I have been called eccentric, fool, and millionaire.

With the drop in land prices, I no longer qualify for the latter. With his help I have bought and paid for a 1,000 acres of land. I owe no one except the Lord God of Creation. It is all His by creation and maintenance. I am just his steward or custodian, and I prevent littering it. His land should be taken care of in perpetuity. One should love his mother; one must love mother earth! We are all parasites on mother earth. We live and move and have our being. From dust we art to dust we returneth! If I can help solve (or prevent) the solid waste problem, my mission will have been completed. To that end, I volunteer!

James L. Watts, a retired colonel in the military, lives near Pelahatchie.

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BJC panel discusses actions of SBC Executive Committee

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — Recent actions by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee affecting the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs received attention during a March 7 meeting of the Washington-based agency's executive committee.

In February, the SBC executive panel:

- Agreed to cut the SBC allocation to the Baptist Joint Committee by 10.7 percent for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

- Declined to act on a proposal by the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee — the SBC's representation on the Baptist Joint Committee — to dissolve SBC institutional and financial ties with the religious liberty organization.

- Agreed to continue sending SBC funds directly to the Baptist Joint Committee, which is composed of nine Baptist conventions, rather than through the Public Affairs Committee.

- Refused to allow the Baptist Joint Committee to have exhibit space at the 1988 SBC annual meeting without PAC approval.

Baptist Joint Committee executive

committee members said they are pleased with the action to retain SBC ties with the Baptist Joint Committee but are concerned over the reduction in SBC funding.

Voicing support for the decision not to consider severing SBC ties, John Binder, committee member and North American Baptist Conference executive director, said he thinks the concept of jointness is stronger when financial support comes to the Baptist Joint Committee through the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget rather than through individual Southern Baptist churches.

J.I. Ginnings, a Southern Baptist representative from Wichita Falls, Texas, also affirmed the SBC Executive Committee's decision that "they want us to stay together." Last October, Ginnings voted against the proposal to disaffiliate with the Baptist Joint Committee, adopted 8-4 by the PAC.

But Ginnings said he is disturbed by the possibility of having to conduct outside funding efforts because of the cut in SBC support. Such efforts might weaken future arguments for con-

tinued Cooperative Program support of the Baptist Joint Committee, he said.

Harold C. Bennett, Baptist Joint Committee member and SBC Executive Committee president, called the potential necessity for long-term fund raising "unfortunate."

To compensate for the 10.7 percent SBC reduction — which represents \$48,400 in funding — the Baptist Joint Committee executive committee gave preliminary approval to a 1988-89 Baptist Joint Committee budget that would require \$103,600 in outside contributions. Original budget projections called for only \$36,000 in such contributions.

Bennett told the committee he has secured approval from PAC Chairman Samuel T. Currin for the Baptist Joint Committee to have exhibit space at the SBC annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. He said the SBC Executive Committee is to study the situation in regard to future conventions.

In addition to discussing SBC Executive Committee actions, the Baptist Joint Committee executive committee (Continued on page 5)

Convention planned for Sunday School

The 1988 Mississippi Baptist Sunday School Convention will take place April 8-9 at Alta Woods Church, Jackson. Activities begin at 6:30 p.m., Friday, and conclude at 3:30 p.m., Saturday.



Piland
School Board.

A total of 61 conference leaders have been enlisted to conduct 131 conferences. Participants may choose to attend four.

Some of the topics are How to break through growth barriers, Help! I'm a new Sunday School director, Where can we find dedicated teachers? Reaching adult absentees, Youth helping youth, Homemade teaching tools for children, and Preschool: One

room — two organizations — How do I cope?

Keith Wilkinson, director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Sunday School Department, said that a focus of the convention is to explain the role of Sunday School in church growth, and of Sunday School workers as growth agents.

The last time Sunday School workers gathered in a convention setting was in 1983. At that meeting, held at First Church, Jackson, more than 1,500 attended.

To ensure that those who plan to attend will be able to get to the conferences, satellite parking areas have been designated.

Parking lots and on street parking are available at Alta Woods Baptist Church, and at the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. Buses should use the Jackson Square parking lot only. Shuttles will be running from these other places to the church.

Cooperative Program bolts ahead of inflation rate

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists' conventionwide budget has bolted past the U.S. inflation rate for the first time this fiscal year.

Record February receipts pushed the national Cooperative Program total to \$56,862,761 for the first five months of the 1987-88 fiscal year, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

The year-to-date total is 5.12 percent

ahead of the total for the similar period a year ago, Bennett said. That compares to a current inflation rate of about 4.5 percent.

The Cooperative Program is the convention's combined budget that finances missionary, evangelistic and educational ministries around the world. Money is channeled from church members to their congregations, to state Baptist conventions and to national and international causes.

Lebanon still closed to missionary presence

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptist missionaries will be kept out of Lebanon for at least another year.

The U.S. State Department has extended its ban on American citizens using their U.S. passports to enter that country through February 1989.

The passport restriction was extended because officials feel conditions in Lebanon have not measurably improved during the past year, according to a letter to Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks from a State Department official.

Twenty-four Southern Baptist missionaries were forced to leave Lebanon last year because of the original ruling.

Responding to the extension ruling, Parks said the State Department obviously operates from a different philosophy than he does, because he feels missions ministry is important enough to continue working in many situations which are not completely safe. In other places around the world equally dangerous, the State Department has not banned U.S. citizens, Parks pointed out.

Court says students can hand out religious paper

WAYNESBORO, Penn. (EP) — A U.S. District Court ordered Pennsylvania School officials to permit three students to distribute a religious newspaper, Caleb Issues and Answers, in their junior high school.

Bryan Thompson, Marc Skunk, and Christopher Eakle were suspended on May 8 and on May 12, 1986, for distributing the religious newspaper

in school hallways before class. Hoping to secure their constitutional rights to free speech, the three boys and their parents brought a lawsuit against the Waynesboro school district for infringement of First Amendment rights. They were represented by attorneys from the

(Continued on page 5)



Sunday School team will head for Wyoming

This group will be heading for Southwestern Wyoming, Apr. 22-30, to help Southern Baptists there in an enrollment and training clinic. Randy Tompkins, MCBP Sunday School Department consultant, is coordinating the Mississippi group. Lottie Crim is campaign coordinator for Wyoming. Charles Crim is director of missions for the two associations, Green River and Overthrust, where the clinic will take place. And Bill Hardy, a former minister of education in Mississippi, is Wyoming state Sunday School director. Mississippi volunteers include Bill Crider, FBC, Hattiesburg; Jerry Smith, FBC, Florence; Mrs. Cynthia Martin, Forkville Church; Tom Stevens, Woodland Hills, Jackson; Tom Pelphrey, FBC, Columbus; Miss Paula Smith, Water Valley Church; Charles Gordon, Choctaw

Association, Ackerman; Rick Spencer, FBC, Plantersville; A.V. Windham, Hillcrest, Jackson; David Millican, South McComb Church; David Hulsey, FBC, Kosciusko; Mrs. Mary Ann Wansley, Valley Park Church; Mrs. Kathryn Waites, Temple, Hattiesburg; Gary Shows, FBC, McComb; Mike Jones, FBC, Oxford; Mrs. Joanne Whitten, Valley Park Church; Mrs. Barbara Wilkinson, Pinelake, Brandon; Miss Kathryn Price, Prentiss Church; Dionne Williams, FBC, Greenville; David Rogers, Main Street, Hattiesburg; Mrs. Joann White, Highland, Vicksburg; Charles Davis, Glade, Laurel; Jim Dalrymple, Gulf Coast Association, Gulfport; Kent Cochran, Calvary, Louisville; Mrs. Lily Culp, Golden Church; and Mrs. Betty Barber, FBC, Clinton.

Baptist men to hold special interest meets

The 1988 Mississippi Baptist Men's Conference, March 19 at Parkway Church, Jackson, will include eight special interest conferences related to the various missions fellowships.

All eight sessions begin at 10 a.m., and conclude at 11:30 for the banquet. Each will have a coordinator in charge and a special speaker or speakers.

The Agricultural Missions Fellowship will have John Carr, coordinator, with Jim and Viola Palmer, missionaries to Honduras, speaking.

Church Renewal Fellowship, Sidney Ellis, coordinator, will have Ellis presenting the 1989 "Year of the Laity" materials.

The Construction Fellowship, Sonny May, coordinator, will feature Larry Cox, interim director of the National Fellowship of Baptist Men.

The Educational Missions Fellowship, Jim Bennett, coordinator, features Jim and Viola Palmer. The Hams Fellowship, Charles Thornton, coordinator, will have Thornton speaking on ways the ham radio operators can help in disaster relief and in helping foreign missionaries communicate with relatives in Mississippi.

The Jail/Prison Ministry group, with Sid Taylor and Eddie Holt, coordinators, will feature Sheldon Gooch,

recently pardoned prisoner from the Rankin County Correctional Facility.

The Prayer/Witness Ministry, Chester Estes Jr., coordinator, will feature Estes, a Mission Service Corps volunteer, discussing how to start prayer and witnessing ministries.

The Volunteers on Mission group, Estus Mason, coordinator, will feature Robert Mills of the Home Mission Board, and James Cecil of the Foreign Mission Board. They will speak on opportunities for long and short term missions projects at home and abroad.

While the adults hold their special interest conferences, high school and collegiate young men will have a rally led by Larry Cox and Kenny Rains who is director of high school Baptist Young Men at the Brotherhood Commission.

The men and boys will meet together for the banquet and then for the missions program at 12:15. That program will be led by Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, with music led by Graham Smith, director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Church Music Department, and with Sheldon Gooch, vocalist.

The meeting is sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood Department.

Campers go to Carthage

The Mississippi Campers on Mission will hold their spring rally, March 24-27 at the Carthage Coliseum Fairgrounds. The campgrounds will be available on March 24 for early arrivals, but the rally begins with registration and a catfish supper on Friday evening, March 25. That evening there will also be music by the First Church, Carthage, quartet, with Dave Elliot as speaker.

A business meeting will take place Saturday, as will a Bible study by Daniel Gilchrist, a session on problems of adult health by Dr. Holliness, and a puppets in ministry seminar by

Ralph and Barbara Henson.

Saturday evening speakers include Paul Williamson and Clay Gibson, with a musical performance called "The Time of Our Lives" by the "Senior Saints" of First Methodist Church, Carthage.

Sunday morning services will be led by Bert Gooch and Ben Blackwell. Mississippi Campers on Mission is a voluntary missions and fellowship group.

The national rally will be June 24-26 at Stone Mountain, Ga. The fall Mississippi rally will be at Biloxi, Sept. 23-25.

Baptist secretaries plan sessions on stress, taxes

Mississippi Baptist secretaries will gather at Camp Garaywa, Clinton, for their annual conference, April 11-12.

Features of the conference include sessions on stress, good health, tax laws, keeping the mail moving, a Mississippi Baptist history, fashion talk, and a series of special interest sessions.

Music leaders will be Bill and Martha Bacon of Clinton where he is minister of music at First Church there.

A Mississippi Baptist Secretaries' Association banquet will take place at 6 p.m., April 11.

The special interest conferences include What a computer can do for a secretary, what's new in letter writing? What is a newsletter? and

Designing a newsletter, News from the Annuity Board, Building a self I can live with, and God's beautiful woman.

Information swapshops include sessions for associational, pastor's, education, records, agency, financial, general, and new secretaries.

Prior registration is necessary to attend any of the conference. A \$20 registration fee covers three meals, lodging, and materials. To register or to obtain details contact Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, or phone 968-3800.

April 4 is registration deadline. The conference begins at noon April 11, and concludes at 3:30 the next day.

SBC moderate leaders want return to roots

By Toby Druin

DALLAS (BP) — Describing the Southern Baptist Convention as a denomination "that is wounded, in turmoil and in pain," seven moderate leaders issued a call for prayer and "a return to the priorities and principles that have characterized this denomination from its beginnings."

A two-page "press statement" and letter from W. Winfred Moore, pastor of First Church, Amarillo, and former first vice president of the SBC, were sent to Baptist state papers, Baptist Press, and other news media March 3.

Besides Moore, others joining in the statement were John F. Baugh, Houston, Laity For... the Baptist Faith and Message; W. Henry Crouch, Charlotte, N.C., Southern Baptist Alliance; George W. Steincross, Liberty, Mo., steering committee, SBC Forum; James H. Slatton, pastor, River Road Church, Richmond, Va.; Libby S. Bellinger, Waco, Texas, SBC Women in Ministry; and Walker Knight, Decatur, Ga., editor, SBC Today.

Steincross told Word and Way, news-journal of Missouri Baptists, the joint statement was issued to illustrate that various moderate groups "are all part of the same train, going in the same direction, even if we are traveling in different cars."

Steincross said he does not know who initiated the moderates' joint statement but is glad to be a part of it.

The statement charged that for the last 10 years, "this denomination has been subjected to the 'takeover' efforts of (Houston layman) Paul Pressler, (Dallas educator) Paige Patterson and other fundamentalist leaders."

"They have stated openly that they would 'go for the jugular' of our convention, that they would take control and enforce their views, and they have done so," the statement adds.

For nine years "fundamentalists leaders have been elected as president and it is time to assess the results," the statement says.

The statement asks a series of ques-

tions about the present condition of the denomination. "Are we better off?" it asks. "Are we united, consecrated to the task of winning people to Jesus Christ? Or are our efforts being directed away from Christian witness to control... lockstep... to conforming to the religious, and often to the political views, of a small and radical group of leaders?"

The statement asks if Southern Baptists are now a better witness for Christ; better off in media coverage; on seminary campuses; on convention boards "stacked with people who march to one tune;" in a mission effort where one of the boards is "torn with controversy and bitterness;" in enhanced fellowship; healthier churches and associations.

"This denomination is on the verge of neutralizing its great witness to a lost world," the statement says. "So we call for prayer; prayer that our denomination might renew its commitment to working together in missions, evangelism, education and ministry; prayer that we might once again be a people under the leadership of God's Spirit."

It adds: "We call, too, for a new direction. To put it simply, we are no longer headed in the Baptist way. We are headed in the wrong way."

Toby Druin writes for the Texas Baptist Standard.

Gifts total \$3 million

February gifts through the Cooperative Program from Mississippi Baptist churches totaled \$1,615,263.

That amount, with January's gifts, total \$3,080,978, which is \$114,466 less than that give in the first two months of 1987, and which is under the pro rata budget figure of \$3,152,500. Total budget for 1988 is \$18,915,000.

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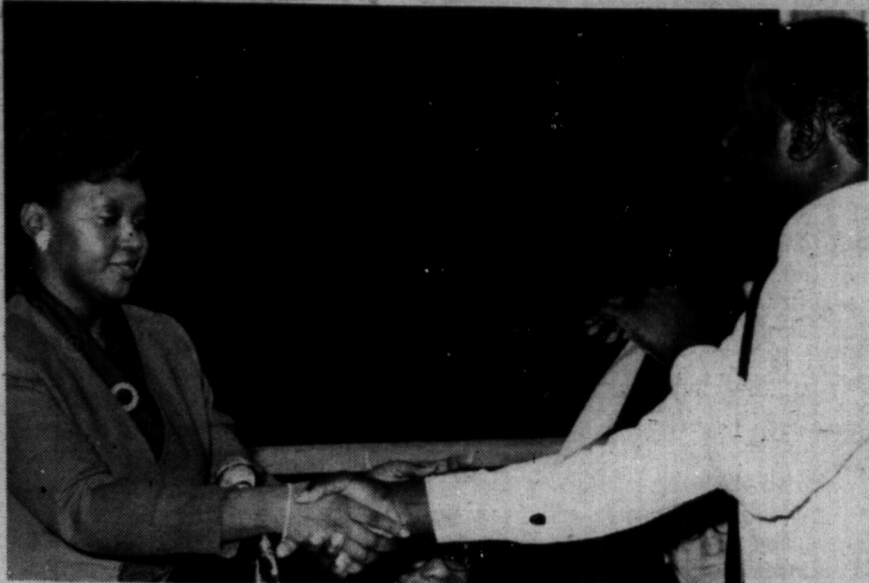
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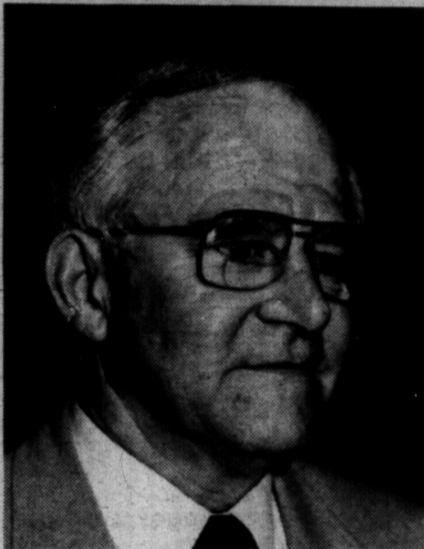
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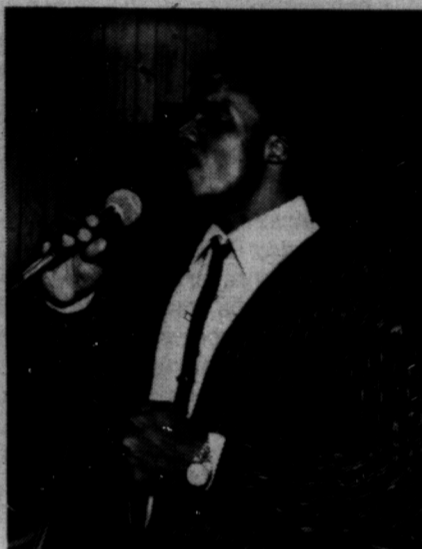
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Theresa Johnson, outreach chairman, presents a certificate to new president Otis Jeffries, for his choirs participation.



Ed Rollins



Sheldon Gooch

First Baptist, Atlanta, to vote on new location

By Joe Westbury

ATLANTA (BP) — First Baptist Church here, a downtown congregation since its founding 140 years ago and ninth largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention, will sell its property and move to the suburbs if members vote to accept a proposal backed by church deacons and staff members.

Charles Stanley, former SBC president and pastor of the church for 18 years, outlined the plan during both Sunday morning worship services March 6.

Later that evening, following a 60-minute question and answer period in an informal two-hour service, members decided to vote on the issue next Sunday morning.

If the proposal succeeds, it would be three years before the church could move into new facilities. Selling the present buildings to generate the cash would be no problem, Stanley said.

Stanley began the morning presentation by saying he was grateful for a congregation that "does not always believe all it reads" in the newspaper.

He then blasted the Atlanta Journal and Constitution for speculative stories that appeared in Friday and Saturday editions and which contained "15 to 20 errors. We asked them not to print the article and they did it anyway."

They did not know what they were saying," he charged. The 50-minute morning report, which stretched the worship services to about 90 minutes, included a video presentation and distribution of a 16-page color booklet outlining the church's plan for growth.

Stanley said the proposal was the result of six years and 3,000 hours of study by the church staff and deacons.

Citing encroaching urbanization that has hemmed the church in on all sides and a neighborhood with a high crime rate that erodes Wednesday and Sunday night attendance, Stanley outlined a plan to relocate the congregation to an undetermined area closer to where its members live.

The plan would call for debt-free construction of a church plant with a sanctuary seating about 7,500. The current sanctuary, constructed in 1930, seats 2,600. The congregation has 11,056 members.

Funds for the project would be raised entirely by sale of the current facilities, which are scattered across parts of seven blocks in downtown Atlanta. The relocation would be at no cost to the congregation, Stanley stressed, underscoring the church's commitment to remain debt free.

Joe Westbury writes for the Home Mission Board.

Students go to Garaywa

Students from Mississippi's predominantly black colleges and universities gathered Jan. 29-30, for the annual Mississippi Black Baptist Student Union Retreat in Clinton. About 179 students met at Camp Garaywa for the retreat sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Bi-Racial Commission and the Department of Student Work of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Ed Rollins of Baptist Student Ministries at the Sunday School Board was the key speaker on Friday night. He spoke from the theme "Jesus is the Answer" urging students to accept Jesus as their personal saviour, and let him lead their lives. Some students made commitments. Rollins also led the seminar on evangelism.

Sheldon Gooch, a Jackson music artist, gave his testimony and a concert.

Richard Brogan, president of Mississippi Baptist Seminary, installed the newly elected officers. He encouraged each person to take Jesus as his personal saviour and leader, and his office seriously. "The Baptist Student Union is a high standard

organization and it must be kept that way," he said. He closed with a commitment from each officer and a prayer to do those things that Jesus will be pleased with.

Officers are Otis Jeffries, president; Bryant Robinson, vice-president; Leoria Harvey, secretary; Elizabeth Dawson, assistant secretary; Theresa Holmes, corresponding secretary; Donald Barnes, treasurer; Lisa Taylor, program chairman; Michelle Young, assistant program chairman; George Harvey, devotional chairman; Audra L. Barnett, membership chairman; Cleopatra Erves, business manager; Arlene Erves, reporter; Mrs. Edna C. Clark, music director; Alex Goodwin, assistant music director; James Pope Jr., organist; Debra Mays, assistant pianist; Michael Hughes, drummer; Tyrone Crawford, guitarist; Mrs. Mary N. Scott, faculty advisor; Mrs. Marsheeta Lindsey Hill, assistant faculty advisor; T. James Anderson Jr., pastoral advisor; Michael Culbreth, assistant pastoral advisor; Mrs. Jessie Dawson, National Baptist state coordinator/consultant.

Court says students . . .

(Continued from page 3)

Rutherford Institute, a nonprofit organization that specializes in the defense of religious groups and individuals.

Ruling in favor of the students on Nov. 24, Judge Sylvia Rambo cited a Supreme Court decision that "students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views." She added, "Fear that expression of an unpopular viewpoint may cause a disturbance or create discomfort is not a constitu-

tionally valid reason for regulating speech."

Caleb Issues and Answers, the newspaper distributed by the students, is published each month by The Caleb Campaign, an Illinois-based ministry. The evangelistic paper is written from a Christian perspective, and contains articles on current events, sports heroes, science, history, the Bible, and interpersonal relationships.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- Mar. 21 State Regional VBS Clinic; Harrisburg BC, Tupelo; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (SS)
- Mar. 21-25 MasterLife/MasterBuilder Workshop; FBC, Starkville; 6 p.m., 21st-Noon, 25th (CT)
- Mar. 22 State Regional VBS Clinic; FBC, Greenwood; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (SS)
- Mar. 23 State Regional VBS Clinic; FBC, Brandon; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (SS)
- Mar. 24 State Regional VBS Clinic; FBC, McComb; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (SS)
- Mar. 24-27 Campers on Mission Rally; Carthage Fairgrounds; 5 p.m., 24th-Noon, 27th (CoMi)
- Mar. 25 State Regional VBS Clinic; Temple BC, Hattiesburg; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (SS)
- Mar. 25-26 Church Drama/Music Conference & Mini-Recreation Lab; Crossgates BC, Brandon; 6 p.m., 25th-4 p.m., 26th (CT)
- Mar. 25-26 Third Grade GA Mother/Daughter Overnight; Camp Garaywa; 4 p.m., 25th-12:30 p.m., 26th (WMU)

BJC panel discusses . . .

(Continued from page 3)

tist Joint Committee panel agreed on plans to develop a new staff evaluation process. Last October, the Baptist Joint Committee refused to give permission for the Public Affairs Committee to conduct an independent evaluation of the Baptist Joint Committee staff but agreed to conduct its own evaluation.

A staff evaluation committee is to bring a report to the full Baptist Joint Committee next October. Southern Baptist representatives on that five-member committee are Currin and Darold Morgan, president of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Acting on other old business, the executive panel:

— Agreed to appoint a committee to review the agency's position statement on civil religion. The full Baptist Joint Committee voted last October to refer that action.

— Received a response from John

H. Buchanan Jr., chairman of People for the American Way, concerning a Baptist Joint Committee resolution that asked the organization to withdraw a videotape that included "portions highly critical of many Christian leaders."

Buchanan said the documentary — which he described as a "statement of concern about religious intolerance" rather than an attack on religious leaders — was produced in 1982 and has not been in "active use by this organization for a very long time."

New churches open

SPRINGFIELD, MO. (EP) — The two-million-member Assemblies of God reported that 307 new churches were opened in 1987, more than its goal of 300 which had been set for the year.

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A conservative Southern Baptist affirmation

(Following is the second half of the statement released by Rogers, Draper, and Smith. Story was printed in March 10 issue.

Part II

(Continued from last week)

II. Prayerful desires

1. Our prayerful desire is for the institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention to work and teach in accord with *The Baptist Faith and Message*, especially concerning the article on "The Scriptures."

In this regard we agree with *The Baptist Faith and Message* that in "Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited

and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the preeminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists."

2. Our further prayerful desire is that nothing will ever be done intentionally in and by the institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention to shake anyone's confidence in the full reliability and infallibility of the Bible.

3. Our further prayerful desire is that institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention recognize local church autonomy in fact, as well as in theory, acknowledging with *The Baptist Faith and Message* that all such institutions and agencies "have no authority over one another or over the churches."

4. Our further prayerful desire is to encourage the institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention as they take every positive step to emphasize and prepare every possible part of our Convention for the task of worldwide evangelism.

5. Our further prayerful desire is for fair and balanced treatment in the denominational press. When issues and disagreements arise within our fellowship, all sides are to be presented fairly and fully.

6. Finally, our prayerful desire is

that those who represent Southern Baptists on the boards of institutions and agencies be selected from among those who affirm Article One of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as set out above.

III. Goals

1. Our goal is to have our prayerful desires (as enumerated above) come to realization within the Southern Baptist Convention.

2. Our goal is to be cooperative with the institutions and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention without being forced to support what we consider to be unconscionable. At the same time we recognize the right and privilege of every Southern Baptist to believe as led by his conscience.

3. Our goal is to make Southern

Baptists ever more aware of the dangers of neoorthodoxy, liberalism, and the misuse of the historical-critical method to the basic doctrines of the Christian faith and to the worldwide mission outreach.

4. Our goal is for the Southern Baptist Convention's institutions, agencies, churches, and people to be used and blessed by God to lead a nationwide revival and spiritual awakening.

5. Our goal is for the foreign and home mission efforts of the Southern Baptist Convention to be used and blessed by God to lead a worldwide expansion of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ through spiritual awakening and revival.

*Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are from Herschel H. Hobbs, *The Baptist Faith and Message*, (Nashville: Convention Press, 1971).

Buchanan harnesses educators to missions opportunities

By Jim Burton

Mississippian Hal Buchanan believes that in the future, missionary strategies will primarily relate to volunteers. And it suits this Southern gentleman just fine, thank you.

As coordinator of the National Fellowship of Baptist Educators, Buchanan finds himself on the cutting edge of a growing missions concept: organizing missions volunteers according to professions.

"The purpose is to try to harness the capabilities of Baptist educators who have a zeal for the missionary spirit that Jesus Christ gave us in Matt. 28:18-29," said Buchanan.

"This is for those who have the gift of teaching and want to use it in a mission opportunity," said Larry Cox, interim director of the National Fellowship of Baptist Men.

Buchanan, 69, brings strong credentials to his role as a volunteer coordinator. He retired in 1978 as dean of education and director of teacher training at Delta State University in

Cleveland.

His position there followed a career in public education that included serving as a principal and a superintendent of schools.

After retirement the couple moved to Tupelo where they are members of Calvary Church.

The late Owen Cooper challenged Buchanan to organize a state educators fellowship for the purpose of enlisting teachers and school administrators for missions.

With the support of Mississippi Brotherhood Director Paul Harrell, the state fellowship was organized. Buchanan is projects coordinator.

Today, the Mississippi Educators Fellowship, formed in March 1986, serves as a model for the national fellowship.

Buchanan describes both the state and national fellowships as being in the embryonic stage of development.

In Mississippi, the fellowship has been involved in three projects, in-

cluding literacy training and a tape ministry to seamen in New Orleans.

This July, five Mississippians will go to China to teach English on a short-term project.

Prior to retirement, Buchanan and his wife, Dot, had not participated in a volunteer missions project.

Like most Baptists, he says they heard about missions, but missions involvement didn't become important until after retirement when their "priorities were realigned."

The National Fellowship of Baptist Men was fielding a group of professionals for a team evangelism project in Thailand. Foreign missionary Ron Hale had requested assistance in reaching older, affluent professional Thais.

The team included a doctor, dentist, veterinarian, businessman, and educator.

Their varied backgrounds gave the team access to civic clubs and professional meetings where they were able



Dot and Hal Buchanan.

to share their testimony as well as professional expertise.

Mrs. Buchanan is a librarian and active in the national fellowship formation process. She called the Thailand mission trip, "the most thrilling thing I've ever experienced."

Jim Burton writes for Brotherhood Commission.

Book Store: one stop shopping

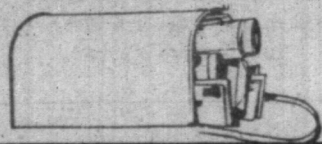
The Baptist Book Store in Mississippi now has one-stop shopping through its computer access capabilities with the Baptist Sunday School Board. Shoppers may order virtually any product of the Sunday School Board at one time by visiting the Baptist Book Store or phoning in Jackson 354-3417.

The five percent cash discount for church literature items (only) still applies. Big ticket items such as steeples, robes, baptistries, are available directly through the Baptist Book Store. And all items may still be purchased on the Baptist Book Store credit card.

Off the Record

Q. What do you get if you cross a chicken with an elephant?

A. I don't know, but Colonel Sanders would have a lot of trouble trying to dip it into the batter.



Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

Appreciate work

Editor:

Your editorials are always enlightening and enjoyable, but your editorial, "What Next, Southern Baptists?" in the February 18 edition was extra good. You gave the issues with

such clarity and fairness.

I always appreciate your work and will always continue to enjoy your friendship, even though we serve in different states.

James E. Scirratt
Fort Worth

Thanks to Anne

Editor:

I feel compelled to respond to the tremendous article written by Anne Washburn McWilliams in her column of March 3 concerning Fanny Mae Cothran, mayor of Lexington.

As one who was born and reared in Holmes County at Durant, it has been my privilege to know this dynamic Christian lady since my boyhood days.

I could not keep from shedding a tear or two as I thought back on those early years and the influence that Fanny Mae Cothran had, not only on my life, but also on the lives of countless numbers of young people in

the Holmes County area. She had a special "ministry of encouragement" in the lives of so many of "us Holmes County boys" entering various phases of ministry. I was among those privileged ones to whom Fanny Mae often referred as "one of her boys."

Over the years, her influence has continued to be felt, not only in the Holmes County area, but also in many other areas as the Lord has opened doors and expanded her sphere of influence. Fanny Mae Cothran is "FOR REAL." Her commitment to the Lord and his Church is absolutely beyond question; her love for and support of God's Ministers is a constant source

of strength, encouragement, and inspiration; and her concern for her fellowman is genuine as she truly seeks to be "one in Christ." Proverbs 31: 10-31 presents a beautiful portrait of this lovely, genteel, Christian lady.

Anne Washburn McWilliams did a magnificent job with the article. Thank you for allowing me to add a heartfelt AMEN!

Ed Sudduth
minister of music/education
Southside Baptist Church
Greenville, MS



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



"Selamat datang"

The Malaysian Airlines plane, like an enormous bird, landed on the runway in Kuala Lumpur. It dipped a wing, leaned far to the right, swung sharply, and dipped to the left. It righted itself; I took a thankful breath.

"Selamat datang," said a kebaya-clad flight attendant, in a charming welcome to her country. Just then, raindrops splashed across the windows, my introduction to the early evening thunderstorms that keep the tropical land evergreen.

A tiny kernel of unease I could not quite dissolve. Arrival cards in bold type said that Malaysia gives the death penalty for drug trafficking. I didn't have to worry about that, unless they counted my Pepto-Bismol tablets. But plans were made for our team of seven to visit a village in the jungle along with the Every Home for Christ director in Malaysia, and two of his young field workers, Eric and Daniel, to give out tracts. Only a few weeks before, 33 evangelical churches in Malaysia had been closed and many Christian leaders had been arrested (some of them Baptists) some sentenced to jail for two years, without trial. (The government had said this was done to "defuse racial and religious tensions.") So Christians were using more than normal caution in their evangelical activities.

Islam is the state religion in West Malaysia. Over half of the Malays are Muslims, and all Christian witness to Muslims is illegal. About 11 percent of Malaysians are from various parts of India, and most of these are Hindus. Over 30 percent are of the population are of Chinese origin and follow the tenets of Buddhism, Confucianism, or

Taoism. The country's constitution calls for freedom of worship, but as far as I could tell, that does not mean freedom to change religious beliefs any time one chooses. Missionary work among the Chinese and Indians supposedly is legal, but it is now being severely limited, as the state laws allow anybody to complain to the authorities about anyone who propagates Christianity (even giving away a tract). And action will be taken. Anyone who gives a tract or a Bible to a Chinese or Indian must first ask permission of the recipient, "May I give you this?"

Our van was on schedule Thursday morning at 7. We drove far up into the mountains to Karak in the state of Pahang. Ancient mariners called this land "The Land Where the Winds Met." Portuguese, looking for spices, were the first Europeans to conquer it. The Dutch and English followed; finally, in 1957, the nation achieved independence. Because of that British influence, we would find quite a few persons speaking English.

"Can you walk four miles?" Eric and Daniel asked. The jungle trail was not wide enough for a car, but motorbikes traveled it. Our group of seven said yes — bravely but foolishly. It would be hard for me to walk four miles in pleasant weather on even ground. The temperature was near 100, the humidity higher than Mississippi's in August, the hills steep, the path rough, the time near noon. It took us an hour to walk half a mile, past banana trees, palms, bamboo . . .

I inched across a swinging bridge, while I looked through holes in broken planks at the muddy river below. A lit-

tle way into a stand of rubber trees, we saw a man collecting the milky juice from little black cups at the base of the slashes. A mosquito popped me on the neck. "We see these every day," Eric said. "And I've been stung by bees. One man tore a tract into pieces, spit on it and threw it in my face. He didn't know he wasn't rejecting me, but was rejecting God's Word." (In the past four years, Eric and Daniel have ridden at least 5,000 miles on motorbikes to deliver tracts to a thousand homes in the jungles, on rubber and palm oil estates, and in fishing villages.)

Daniel said, "One day I stopped at a house and a fierce dog came from nowhere and bit my leg. I could see the dog was biting my leg like no one's business, but I felt no pain. Finally the dog let go. I checked to see if there were any bruises but there was not a single mark! I thank God for his protection, as if God holds the teeth of the dog!"

"At the rate we are going, we'll never get out by curfew time," Eric said. This was one of the jungle areas under curfew because of intermittent military activity. Only people who lived or worked there had a permit to be in the area after 3 p.m.

Once two young men had almost run into some soldiers combing the jungle, but they had escaped being shot. They were anxious for us to leave before 3. So we agreed to return to the van and ride to a village of Chinese and Indian residents on a rubber plantation.

What kind of reception would we find there, I wondered. Would anyone refuse to accept our literature, or would someone even call the police? (Continued next week)

Book reviews

HIS GIFT OF LOVE by Augustine Burch and Rosalee Mills Appleby (Banner Press, Box 20180, Birmingham, Alabama 35216, 67 pp., \$8.95) This new book contains inspirational verse and devotional thoughts. An autograph party for the two authors will be held March 18 from 1 until 5 p.m. at the Christian Book Store, 117 1/2 S.R.R.A., Brookhaven. The public is invited.

The beautiful hard cover book is bound in red and embossed with gold. Illustrations in color are by Bettye Watkins Taulbee.

Augustine Burch is a member of First Baptist Church, Brookhaven, and worked with preschool children there for many years. This is her second book of poetry. Her son, Ronnie Burch, is a Baptist minister. Her daughter, Vicky Swalm, is a speech therapist. She began writing poetry when she was in high school. "I learned very young about God," she writes, . . . "I saw God always in the little things, but I learned of His greatness from my grandfather, a Methodist minister."

Rosalee Mills Appleby is a member of First Baptist Church, Canton. At age 93, she lives in a retirement home in Canton. For 37 years she was a missionary in Brazil. Her husband, David Appleby, died in Brazil in 1929, but she remained until 1960. She is the author of eight books, including *The Life Beautiful*, *Orchids and Edelweiss*, and *White Wings of Splendor*. In addition, she has written other books published in Portuguese.

This book reflects spiritual truths. Mrs. Burch's poems are on subjects such as God's gift of love, His Son; the little things of life; prayer, God's creation; the beauty of the changing seasons; "the narrow way," and the message of Christmas. Seventeen meditations from Mrs. Appleby's pen blend with and complement the poems.

As Frances J. Roberts said in the Foreword, "Augustine Burch has been blessed with two special gifts: the sensitivity to see God's love as it is expressed through the beauty of nature and through human relationships, and the ability to share her insights with others through poetic writing."

Mrs. Appleby's prose reads like poetry. It is rich and deep, every word crafted with care and freighted with wonderful meaning.

This book would be a nice gift book for many occasions, or good to keep on one's devotional shelf, to refer to again and again. — AWM



Burch



Appleby

Thursday, March 17, 1988

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Court declines review of textbooks dispute

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court will not review a lower decision that determined parents do not have a constitutional right to teach their children at home when required textbooks offend their religious sensibilities.

In a one-line order issued Feb. 22, the high court — with no justice recording a dissent — let stand a disputed ruling by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals last August that the Hawkins County (Tenn.) School Board was not obligated to provide the alternative reading arrangement for pupils whose parents objected to a Holt, Rhinehart and Winston reading series.

That ruling followed a trial in the east Tennessee county two years ago — dubbed "Scopes II" by many reporters — in which seven sets of parents detailed their objections on religious grounds to required reading assignments ranging from "Cinderella" to "Hamlet." Other objectionable reading selections in the challenged textbooks included "The Wizard of Oz," "Rumpelstiltskin" and "The Diary of Anne Frank."

Judge Thomas G. Hull of the U.S. District Court for Eastern Tennessee ruled in October 1986 the school board's refusal to accommodate its policies to the parents' and students' demands amounted to an unconstitutional infringement of the free exercise of religion. He wrote the plaintiff/parents were legitimately con-

cerned their children "might adopt the views of a feminist, a humanist, a pacifist, an anti-Christian, a vegetarian or an advocate of a 'one-world government.'"

On appeal, a three-judge panel of the Cincinnati-based 6th Circuit Court ruled unanimously the parents and students had not proven their claim of religious discrimination. Chief Judge Pierce Lively wrote, "The requirement that students read the assigned materials and attend reading classes, in the absence of a showing that this participation entailed affirmation or denial of a religious belief, or performance or non-performance of a religious exercise or practice, does not place an unconstitutional burden on the students' free exercise of religion."

Lively held the state is under no constitutional obligation to shelter children "from exposure to some ideas they find offensive."

Among those ideas, cited at trial by the parents, were religious views other than Christian and portrayals of women in non-traditional roles. They also objected to examination of certain controversial subjects during reading classes, including critical examination of the free enterprise system, the military and law enforcement practices, as well as discussions of environmental issues, disarmament, gun control and abortion.

The Supreme Court's refusal to hear their appeal of the 6th Circuit decision marks the end of the dispute.

Involvement in church business not an option for Christians

By Linda Lawson

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Involvement in their church, their denomination, and the affairs of government is not an option for Christians who believe they have direct access to God in union with Jesus Christ.

This theme was sounded by several speakers at a national conference here on the doctrine of priesthood of believers sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department.

"Our sovereign right, our scriptural responsibilities are lost by apathy and non-participation," said Billie Friel, pastor of First Church, Mount Juliet, Tenn., in a presentation on Baptist polity and priesthood of believers.

He noted that business meetings in many churches are often poorly attended.

As a pastor, Friel said in recent years he has come, in a practical sense, to believe "a Baptist church is activated through democratic processes under the leadership of Christ. If we inform our people and give them time to think and pray, they will vote the mind of God."

Eugene Cotey, pastor of First Church, Murfreesboro, Tenn., said: "The Southern Baptist Convention is an assembly of individual Baptist-Christians striving in freedom to formulate policies within the will of the

Lord. His will must transcend the will of the churches and their leaders."

He said in the 20th century Baptists have used the term messenger rather than delegate to describe participants in the annual convention meeting, in part, because they do not represent their churches and are not instructed how to vote.

"The term 'instructed messenger' destroys the meaning of the term messenger," said Cotey. "If a messenger is instructed, the freedom of the priesthood of believer is constricted. A messenger does not represent his church but his Lord."

Altus Newell, pastor of Dawson Memorial Church here, said religious liberty and separation of church and state, like all freedom, "can be taken for granted. It can be compromised and it can be lost."

Christians are to give their allegiance to their government and to God, recognizing that their first allegiance is to God, he said.

Even as Christians exercise their responsibilities as citizens, we must not live under the illusion that if we elect the right candidates, the nation will experience spiritual renewal," said Newell. "That would be to expect the state to do the work of the church."

Linda Lawson writes for the Sunday School Board.

Just for the Record



First Church, Mathiston, recently held a GA Recognition Service. Girls were recognized for each completion of their mission adventures. Amy Herrington, Tiercy Kellum, and Jody Stidham received a plaque for finishing all six. The GA leaders are Polly Long, Willette Stidham, and Sue Swindoll. Higdon Herrington is pastor.

Pictured, left to right, are Willette Stidham, Marilynn Stidham, Stephanie Harpole, Heather Swindoll, Sherri Mann, Holly Stidham, Jodi Stidham, Renee Campenella, Amy Herrington, Christy Campenella, Amy Cooper, Kelly Bowen, Brandi Warren, and Tiercy Kellum.



Members of Drawn Together are (seated, from left): Suzanne Tindoll — Kosciusko; Preston Bostwick — Arlington, Ga.; Tracy Tyler — Duck Hill; Dennis Aldy — Sallis; Andrea Hemphill — Louisville; Standing: Todd Davis — Columbus; Clark Leake — Tupelo; Mickey Gibson — Forest; Wes McComas — Jackson.



Members of the Fishermen are (seated, from left): John Marshall — Vicksburg; Lou Ann English — Vicksburg; Wendy Buckner — Jackson; Nancy Bigelow — Columbus; Mike East — Tupelo; Standing: Dana McArthur — Canton; Bill Burnett — Columbus; Bob Stephenson — Brentwood, Tenn.; Todd Houston — Vicksburg; Angela Henderson — Clinton.

MSU groups witness through music

The Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union has two contemporary music groups, Drawn Together and The Fishermen. They present a Christian witness through contemporary music, scripture, and testimonies. The groups have sung and shared for worship services, concerts, conferences, retreats, and banquets.

For additional information on these groups contact the Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union, Box BU, Mississippi State, MS 39762 or call 323-5761.

Holly Springs Church, Brookhaven, will celebrate its homecoming on March 20. Lunch will be served, followed by a short business meeting and gospel singing. Carl B. Case will be the speaker. All proceeds go to the upkeep of the cemetery.

The Mississippi Baptist Seminary will celebrate its 46th Founder's Day Celebration on Saturday, March 26. Seminary friends will celebrate at the Farish Street Baptist Church; 619 N. Farish Street; Jackson, Mississippi, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Church Development Workshops and lunch will be provided at no cost. For more information or to make lunch reservations, please call 944-1741.

Cholesterol education programs are being offered free to the public through June 30 at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson. The class "Anatomy of Heart Disease" is held Thursdays from noon to 1 p.m. in the Cardiac Rehab Room on MBMC's third floor. "Low Cholesterol, Low Fat Diets" is featured from noon to 1 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays in the auditorium on the hospital's subway level. "Lowering Your Cholesterol Level — How and Why" is offered Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the Gilfoy Auditorium through the North State Street entrance. For more information call 968-1000 and ask for a member of the Cardiac Rehab Team.

GAs of Prospect Church, Richton, will have a spaghetti supper, March 26, beginning at 4 p.m. For more information, call 964-3447. Raymond Clifton is pastor.

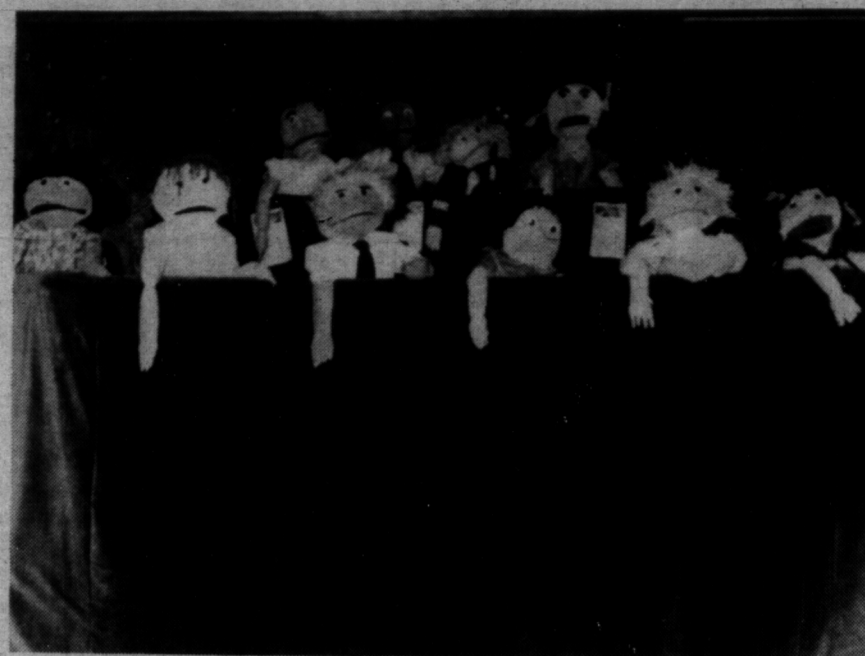
Staff changes

H. Frank Smith has accepted the pastorate of Sunrise Church, Rt. 5 Box 104, Carthage, effective March 20. He has served Concord Church, Pelahatchie, for nine years. He and his wife, Shirley, have moved to Carthage.

Lowrey Memorial Church, Tippah, called Chris Aldridge as minister of youth/children, effective March 13. Aldridge is a freshman at Blue Mountain College. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Aldridge of Verona and First Church, Verona. Matt Buckles is pastor.

First Church, Booneville has called Harold Lollar, Jr. as associate pastor, effective Jan. 14. He is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary and has pastored in Clarke and Sunflower Counties. Bill Duncan is pastor.

Larry McDonald is the new pastor of County Line Church, near Puckett. The church welcomes him March 20 with a special worship time at 11 a.m., with music by Randy Speights. Dinner on the grounds will follow. McDonald, a graduate of Mississippi College and International School of Theology, is earning a doctor of ministry degree from Reformed Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Tina, have a son, Benjamin.



The Sunshiners of Emmanuel Church, Union, were recently at Pleasant Grove Church, and New Ireland Church, to present their puppet show on daily Christian living. Girls in the group are Amanda Harrison, Bridgett Stevens, Beverly Finley, Jessica Smith, Kim Brooks, Michelle Stevens, Nicole Pearson, Peggy Warren, and Deborah Wolverton. Directors of the group are Barbara Warren and Cheryl Chaney.

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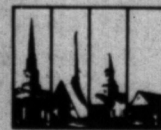
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Names in the news



History was made at Good Hope Church, Leake Association, on Feb. 28. At the close of the morning message, Odell Tebo, pastor, baptized three people. Baptism was not new at the church, but baptism inside the church was a new experience. The baptistry was installed in the renovation of the sanctuary, which was completed Feb. 22, 1988. Pictured are Dena McCrory, Tamara Moss, Ashley Byram, and Odell Tebo.

Revival dates

Crowder, Crowder: March 20-25; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon-Fri., 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Jimmy Russell, Pontotoc County, preaching; Wed., 11 a.m., senior adult lunch; Harvey Sewell, pastor.

First, Petal: March 20-25; Athens McNeil, pastor, Griffin Street Church, Moss Point, evangelist; Louis Nicolosi, minister of music, First, Purvis, music; services, regular scheduled hours on Sunday, and at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mon-Fri.; W. A. Fordham, pastor.

Grace Chapel, Brooklyn: spring youth revival; March 25-27; Sunday, dinner on the grounds and afternoon service, 1 p.m.; Kyle Welsh, evangelist; presentations from the BSU programs of USM, William Carey, and PRCC will be presented; Frank C. Rice, pastor.

Crestview, Petal: March 20-25; Grady Crowell, director of missions, Clarke County, Quitman; evangelist; Brad Griffin, Hattiesburg, music; Sunday services, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. weekday services, 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Liberty, Liberty: Mar. 30-Apr. 3; James Sadler, evangelist; Larry Rogers, music evangelist; services, Wed-Fri., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, Apr. 3, Easter Sunrise Service, 7 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.

First Church of Runnelstown, Hattiesburg: March 20-25; Jerry File, guest speaker; Sunday services, Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., worship service, 11 a.m., church training, 5 p.m., worship service, 6 p.m.; Mon-Fri., 10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.; David Moore and Roger Blackwell, music; Henry Freeman, pastor.

Utica, Utica: March 20-25; service, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Johnny Goodwin, evangelist; Robert Andrews, music; John Ed Snell, pastor.

Alta Woods, Jackson: March 20-25; services Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; March 21-25 at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; evangelist, Gordon Sansing, pastor, First, Vicksburg; music director, Bob Jones, minister of music at Alta Woods; pastor, Frank Thomas.

Cherry Park, Clinton: March 20-25; Sunday services, 11 a.m., 7 p.m.; Mon-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Mike Willoughby, Arden, N.C., evangelist; Billy Rayburn, Clinton, music; Hollis Alderman, pastor.

Bond, Wiggins: March 27-April 1; Howard Aultman, Columbia, evangelist; John W. Wade, Sr., pastor; dinner on the ground, March 27; special singing all week.

Concord (Tippah): April 3-7; morning services, 11 a.m.; evening services, 7:15 p.m.; Odus Jackson, pastor, Leesburg Church, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Brookhaven, music evangelist; W. G. Dowdy, pastor.

Calvary, Ellisville: April 3-7; 7 p.m.; evangelist, Clif Estes, Shreveport; pastor, Ralph Graves.

Carey chorale goes on tour

The Carey College Chorale of William Carey College is on a five-state church tour singing in 11 churches in the South and Midwest from March 9-18. Gene Winters, dean of the Carey School of Music, is director.

The chorale's program is a complete worship service, with musical interpretations of prayers, poetry, scripture readings, hymns, and anthems.

Accompanying the chorale is the Carey Carillon, the college handbell ensemble. Directed by assistant professor of music Jeff McLelland, who also served as the chorale's accompanist. In addition, the Show Choir is performing during fellowship periods directed by assistant professor of music Josephine D'Arpa, who also serves as choral assistant.

Florida man starts inerrantist magazine

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP) — A new Southern Baptist magazine written by inerrantists is expected to begin publishing next month in Jacksonville, Fla., but its editor says it will be different from other autonomous publications in the denomination.

Editor Dan Allen, until recently vice president of public affairs for Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, said The SBC Cause will be a "positive magazine for conservative Southern Baptists who want to win people to Jesus Christ."

Those who write for the magazine will have to sign a statement saying they are inerrantists, Allen said.

The publication will be a full-color monthly magazine with subscribers and advertisers nationwide, he said. Initially it will be mailed to every church in the Southern Baptist Convention, he added, "and they'll decide if they want to continue to receive it."

The magazine will be published by a non-profit group operated by a board of directors, but Allen said the directors will not be publicly named.

Printed material on the publication says that each issue of the magazine will include a "National Directory of Conservative Southern Baptist Churches." To be included on the list, a church must have an inerrantist for its pastor and contribute at least \$25 a month to the magazine.

Fellowship, Meridian, will celebrate 150th

Fellowship Church, the oldest church in Lauderdale County, will be celebrating its 150th anniversary on Sunday, April 10. The schedule will begin with Sunday School at 10 a.m., followed by morning worship at 11.

A picnic lunch will be provided by the church. The afternoon's activities will consist of a reception 2-4 p.m. in the fellowship hall with special music and speaking in the sanctuary throughout the afternoon.

There will be brief messages from former pastors with inspiring singing from The Watchmen and former ministers of music. Jeffrey R. Parker is pastor.

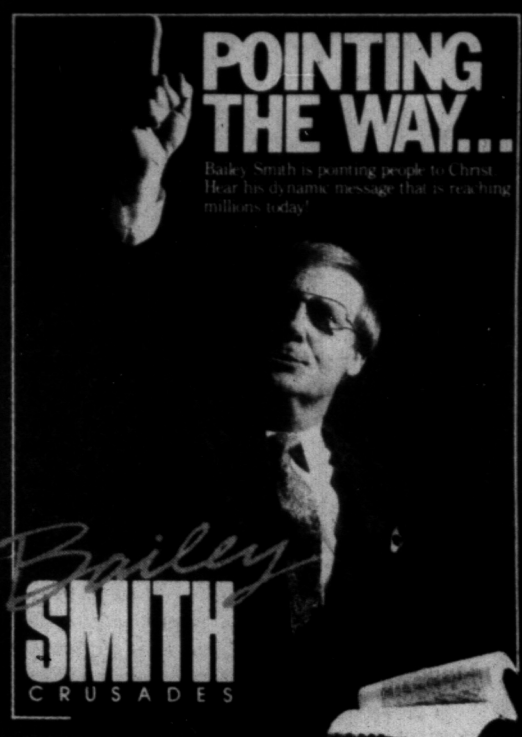
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Can you love the Lord totally?

By M. Dean Register

When I was a young Christian I would look at the Ten Commandments and try to imagine how I could obey each one. The task seemed impossible. Soon, however, I learned that the key to fulfilling the Commandments is to love God and to love others. Love is the catalyst that inspires moral obedience. To live victoriously one must love God vigorously.



Register

In Deut. 6:4-5, Moses reminded the Israelites that the God who gives his love has a right to expect love in return. This particular passage of Scripture is known as the "Shema." (So named because of the Hebrew word for "hear.") The Shema is a summary of the law, a description of the uniqueness of God, and a call to love God totally.

The Israelites were frequently confronted by a plurality of deities thriving in the imaginations of their pagan neighbors. Quite often these deities espoused conflicting moral and social instructions to such an extent that the people were confused about right and wrong. As we

LIFE AND WORK

have observed in our study of the Ten Commandments, God is the unique and final authority for believers. The statement, "The Lord our God is one God," revealed the sovereignty of God over all competing deities. The verse can be translated, "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone."

Since the Lord is supreme, he is to be the sole object of our allegiance and affection. Moses explained that this affection, or love for God, should be "with all one's heart, with all one's soul, and with all one's might." (Deut. 6:5) God is worthy of our total love. It is important to love God with all our heart because he deserves our deepest passion. It is essential to love God with all our soul because he deserves our intimate devotion. It is right to love him with all our might because he deserves our finest effort. Our love is incomplete if it involves only one part of us and not our whole self.

Such total love for God exerts a centrifugal force. It compels us outward to touch others. Intimacy with God always empowers us toward ethical behavior with our brothers and sisters in the human race. Consequently, Moses ex-

plained in Lev. 19:18 that we are to "love our neighbor as ourself." R. E. Clements called this verse the "supreme ethical demand of the Old Testament."

The verse takes on even greater significance from the lips of Jesus. When asked by a lawyer what was the greatest commandment in the law our Lord replied by quoting Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18 and he added that these two commands are the pegs on which all the law and the prophets hang. (Matt. 22:40).

It is significant that Jesus indicated that our love for others is in proportion to our love for ourselves. We should realize our own worth and value as persons created in God's image. We should love ourselves and allow God to establish a healthy self-esteem within us. Real love for ourselves is not narcissism. If we love God rightly, we will love ourselves properly, and in turn love others correctly.

In John 13:34-35, Jesus gave a new commandment to love one another. How was it new? Certainly the Old Testament had already established the responsibility of love. It was new in terms of quality. Specifically it requires us to love others like Jesus loves us. The love that Jesus demonstrated was radically different. He loved when it wasn't comfortable or convenient.

He loved when he had been reviled and rejected. He loved the broken, hurting people of the world and he even loved so much that he went to the cross to save us from our sin. This is a radically different kind of love.

The first century disciples and the twentieth century Christians are under the same mandate: love one another. Jesus made it clear that loving one another was a positive witness to the world. The world today doesn't know we are disciples of Jesus by our programs, plans, advertisements, building, or even by our doctrine. The world comes to understand Jesus Christ by the love his followers demonstrate.

Martin Luther King Sr., affectionately called "Daddy King" lived a life of love and forgiveness despite personal tragedy. His son was killed by a sniper in 1968, another son was drowned in 1969 in a home swimming pool, and his wife was killed in 1974 when a gunman opened fire during a church service. When asked about the trauma of all his ordeals he replied, "I taught my family to love . . . I can't afford to hate. I know what it leads to." May we all practice love for our Savior and love for everyone he died to save.

Dean Register is pastor, First, Gulfport.

Joseph settles his family in Egypt

By Gayle Alexander

Genesis 45:16 to 47:31

As the failing old patriarch listened to his sons report that Joseph was not only alive, but the ruler of all of Egypt, Jacob was stunned into disbelief. Such news was almost more than he could bear and he grew faint, or numb. He was paralyzed by doubt and hope. His sons had perpetrated deception on him before, but not this time. The convincing proof about Joseph was not the report itself but the Egyptian wagons sent to expedite the move to Egypt.



Alexander

Accepting the report as being true, his spirit revived with enthusiasm. He decided immediately to go to Egypt to see Joseph. Of course, we see this chain of events from the future side of Jacob, but one can't help feeling the pathos of seeing God's chosen people desert God's gift of the land. One pays a heavy price for disobedience. Caught in the throes of pressing need and the hunger of heart to see each

BIBLE BOOK

other, apparently neither Joseph, nor Jacob, sought God's direction about the move from Canaan to Egypt. The wheels of God's judgment turn slowly, but nevertheless they do turn.

Jacob, and all of the families, were located in the land of Rameses which is identical with the land of Goshen. Goshen was situated in the delta of the Nile and was the best of the land for herds and flocks. It was near Memphis, where Joseph lived. The area included the place of the famous city later built by Rameses.

Joseph was the governor of all of Egypt and had the power for controlling grain distribution. "Joseph nourished his father . . ." (47:12). To nourish means also to sustain, or to protect, and Joseph did all three of these in providing care for Jacob and the rest of the families.

"And Joseph bought all of the land of Egypt for Pharaoh" (47:20). Here one sees the wisdom and orderliness of Joseph's organization. Instead of creating selfishness and waste by giving the grain away, he sold it, and thereby built respect for the value of what the people were

receiving. When their money ran out, they brought their livestock and exchanged them for grain.

When they no longer had livestock, they offered to sell themselves and their lands. Joseph accepted their offer and bought all the people and their lands. He then moved them to new cities to facilitate the grain distribution; however, instead of reducing them to slaves, he only required the same 20% of their harvest as he did before the famine. The people rejoiced and praised him for saving their lives.

God is faithful to prepare us for what he has prepared for us. Joseph had learned his wisdom for building organization and loyalty as a slave himself. He had discovered that freedom comes in willingly serving those who are in authority over you. He had been moved to a new city with no possessions. Joseph's work as a slave was done with an enthusiasm and loyalty lacking in his peers. Elevation to the position of steward in Potiphar's house gave him the opportunity to organize the complex household, thus gaining valuable experience as an administrator in business economics and labor relationships. This had freed him to increase the possessions

of those he was serving. In painfully difficult circumstances he learned priceless lessons of loyalty. With God's foresight and wisdom he was able to build a plan of organization that saved Egypt from famine, and also, instilled loyalty and orderliness in the people as well.

Jacob lived in the land of Goshen for 17 years. A final request to Joseph was that he not be buried in Egypt, but in Canaan. "Israel" in verse 27 now applied to all of the families as the people of Israel. They had gained possessions and had grown to be wealthy.

A further fulfillment of Joseph's boyhood dream is revealed in the words of Jacob, "If I have found favor in your sight . . ." (47:29). This is strange indeed for a father to be saying to a son because it is the speech of a subordinate to a superior. Bowing to Joseph, Jacob was regarding him as the ruler of Egypt as well as being Joseph, his son. The desire to be buried in Canaan was so strong that Jacob made Joseph swear on an oath to see that it was done. Canaan was the land of covenant fulfillment, not Egypt.

Gayle Alexander is pastor, First, Tupelo.

Jesus in Gethsemane, for him the holiest of holies

By Jimmy G. McGee

Matthew 26:36-50

Gethsemane is the holy ground of the New Testament, the holiest of holies for Jesus. What takes place here in Spirit is pictured on the cross of Calvary. Gethsemane is the place of voluntary surrender and deliberate submissiveness of Jesus to the perfect will of the Father. We ought to approach the garden with thoughtful reverence. We here find encouragement and direction in the prayerful affirmation of God's will for us.



McGee

"Rise, let us be going" (verse 46) speaks pointedly to Jesus' trust in and complete reliance on the Father. Firm assurance is fixed (1) for himself in accomplishing salvation and (2) for his disciples in that the Holy Spirit would keep them (note Jesus' prayer of John 17). Having prayed, Jesus resolves to complete the action of dying on the cross. Even the taunt,

UNIFORM

"Come down . . . we will believe" (Matthew 27:42), does not tempt him otherwise.

Gethsemane on the one hand is the crucible for Jesus; on the other hand it is his prayer chamber in which he is familiar with the Father's presence. Prayer is so important in decision making. And real prayer never sets out to change the mind of God but to fuse our will into his. How precious is God's promise of Romans 8:26 assuring us that when we do not know how to pray as we ought, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us!

Jesus took the eleven to the place called Gethsemane. "Sit here, while I go and pray," He said. Leaving the eight and taking Peter, James, and John deeper into the garden, Jesus said, "Stay here and watch with me." Then alone Jesus went deeper into the garden and began to agonize in prayer. "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Three times he prays. So intense is his pray-

ing that Luke (22:44) says "His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." What a crucible and what agony! Dare we think it was easy for Jesus? Jesus came in the flesh to identify with us. He was a man in struggle with issues of good and evil and he was all good. Having the possibility of sinning, he did no sin. It was not easy for Jesus!

"Let this cup pass." The price was high, and he was willing to give all. The cup was filled with the bitter dregs of sin of all mankind and its acceptance meant his death by crucifixion. The shame of the cross numbered him with transgressors and separated him momentarily from the Father. It was God's will.

All his life Jesus did God's perfect will, at no time more so than another. Here is the final opportunity to abort the mission or find another way. Like everybody in the final crisis, decisions are made alone and alone is the responsibility.

What loneliness! "What, could you not watch with me one hour?" "Watch" perhaps meant to protect his privacy but more likely to involve

themselves in his passion. They were present in body and oftentimes that's the best we can do.

He was betrayed by a "friend." His disciples slept while he prayed; later they would flee in the night to escape danger and one would deny ever knowing him. What a commentary on our kind! "The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (verse 41). In their spirit they shared no animosity or misgiving about what Jesus was doing. They allow him although they do not comprehend. They were not watching and they were not praying because they were weak in flesh. Perhaps their greatest danger was in the failure to see and acknowledge their weakness. Paul expressed it, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God — through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24-25).

If doing God's will is your primary concern in life, you'll need strength from God, and submissive praying is your best assurance. The "if" of the above sentence is not intended as an option but underscored as the only way for the victorious Christian.

Jimmy G. McGee is pastor, First, Grenada.

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A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Powerline for teens

"My boyfriend has fathered a child"

QUESTION

I have a really big problem. I just found out that my boyfriend has fathered a child. The girl he used to go with took advantage of him to try to trap him into marriage. She got him drunk and that's how it happened. We've been together three years and we really love each other. He doesn't want to marry this other girl, but she's putting a lot of pressure on him. I don't know what to think? What can I do?

ANSWER

There are several factors to think about. First, there is your friend's involvement with this girl and his obligation to her. Regardless of the circumstances under which he became a father, he has a legal and moral obligation to help support the child. This does not mean that he must marry the

girl, and certainly if he does not truly care for her; that would only be piling one mistake on top of another. But if he acknowledges that the child is his, he has some decisions to make — what financial support he will give, whether he will visit the child, and so on.

At the same time, you have some decisions to make regarding your relationship with him. You may need to examine your values and his to see whether you really have the same standards. The fact that he allowed himself to be in the kind of situation where this could occur may tell you something about his character, and integrity.

God has given us some very clear guidelines for our relationships with each other and the kind of commitments we make to each other. Unless this man accepts and lives by those values, your life together might be characterized by deception, mistrust, and betrayal.

So this may be the time to back off and examine the relationship from every angle. No doubt you want to stand by your friend at this time when he needs you, but you also need to take into account what is best for yourself, not only now but in the future.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST RADIO-TV COMMISSION / FORT WORTH, TX 76150

Friday holiday upheld

HONOLULU, HAWAII (EP) — A federal district court has upheld Hawaii's Good Friday holiday. Judge Alan Kay ruled late last year that even though Good Friday has religious significance, the state obser-

vance is similar in character to other holidays with religious significance — such as Thanksgiving and Christmas — and therefore does not violate the church-state provisions of the Constitution.

Baptist Record

Reagans press anti-drugs crusade

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan took their crusade against drug use and trafficking to a White House conference in Washington, with Mrs. Reagan saying the message must go out that Americans "will not stand for illicit drug use of any kind, period."

In back-to-back keynote addresses

to the White House Conference for a Drug-Free America, President and Mrs. Reagan urged a national battle against drugs on two fronts — a campaign to intercept drugs imported into the United States and prosecute those responsible for distributing them and an aggressive effort to convince citizens any drug use is unacceptable.

Arguing against the notion that casual drug use has no victims, she pointed to prominent public officials in Colombia, including Supreme Court justices and the nation's attorney general, all murdered by the drug cartel in the South American country most notorious as a source of illicit drugs. She noted several Drug Enforcement Administration agents killed in the line of duty in recent years. And she introduced members of families whose children were murdered by drug users or who died in accidents caused by drug use.

"The casual user may think when he takes a line of cocaine or smokes a joint in the privacy of his nice condo, listening to his expensive stereo, that he's somehow not bothering anyone," Mrs. Reagan said. "But there is a trail of death and destruction that leads directly to his door. The casual user cannot morally escape responsibility for the action of drug traffickers and dealings. I'm saying that if you're a casual drug user, you're an accomplice to murder."

She urged a tougher outlook on the price drug users should pay, saying: "I want to make it impossible for casual users to escape responsibility for any innocent death due to drugs. I want to make them fully face the brutality of drug use."

For his part, President Reagan outlined progress in the escalating war against drug smuggling and distribution. He pointed to coordination among federal, state, and local authorities as an approach conceived and initiated by his administration.

Reagan also credited increased numbers of federal prosecutors and drug agents with last year's confiscation of more than \$500 million in "drug-related assets," the closure of 682 "clandestine laboratories" and seizure of 92,000 pounds of cocaine, "all records," he said.

ACTS Easter specials

Sunday, March 20, 1988:

1:00 p.m.

Sunday Selection:

"The Gospel According to St. John." Breath-taking scenery accompanies this dramatic portrayal of the King James Version of the gospel of John. British actor Paul Alexander narrates the journey. (Repeats: Monday, March 21, 12:30-2:00 a.m. and 4:30-6:00 a.m.)

Sunday, March 27, 1988:

1:00 p.m.

Sunday Selection:

"The Power of the Resurrection." Toward the end of his life in a Roman prison, Peter recalls the drama of Jesus' last days for a young Christian imprisoned with him. Through Peter's eyes, we relive Jesus' final visit to Jerusalem, His growing conflict with the religious establishment, the triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the last supper with His disciples, his arrest, trial, death and resurrection. (Repeats: Monday, March 28, 12:30-2:00 a.m. and 4:30-6:00 a.m.)

Wednesday, March 30, 1988:

5:00 p.m.

In Concert:

"Joy Comes in the Morning." A biblical portrayal of Jesus' crucifixion through music and drama performed by the 300-voice choir of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas. (Repeats: Thursday, March 31, 12:30-1:30 a.m.)

Devotional

Longing for God

By Kara Blackard
Psalm 42

Psalm 42 is one of the most graphic illustrations, in all the Bible, of our need for constant fellowship with God. As the Psalmist writes, he is exiled many miles from home and his heart longs for the hills of Zion. How precious that he does not ponder worldly ways and worldly wisdom. He does not seek out learned scholars and mortal advisors to counsel him concerning his broken heart. He does what every man on earth ought to do. He takes it to the Lord in prayer!

To put things in perspective, one must remember that in Old Testament days the Holy Spirit had not yet been given, and much of the believer's worship was directly related to the events of the temple. To separate an Old Testament believer from the temple was to deny him the joy and fulfillment of taking part in the different aspects of worship there. Thus the psalmist, separated from the place of worship and longing for the Lord, becomes a picture of a New Testament believer out of fellowship with God. Having tasted the goodness of the Lord, the believer could find nothing else ever to satisfy. If one has truly appropriated the sparkling water of life, the stagnant pools of earth will only make him more miserable! Notice three truths that emerge from these verses:

I. The problem that is illustrated: (verse 1) "... so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." It is obvious that the psalmist requires no further persuasion concerning his need. The search-light of heaven has illumined his heart and, in the stillness of that moment, he knows he has drifted from God. Notice how he describes the problem:

A. Serious. As desperately as the hart needs water, so desperately do we

require fellowship with him. It is truly alarming that so many do not view broken fellowship as being serious. But fellowship with God is not a luxury. It is essential. It is the origin of our service, the essence of our testimony, and the strength of our walk. To remove fellowship from the believer's life is like taking the blue out of the sky, or removing the stars from the night. It is indeed a serious problem when the Christian has lost the joy of salvation.

B. Specific. The psalmist said I'm "thirsting" after God. Isn't it wonderful how specific God gets when he speaks to us? You don't have to wonder what the problem is. God points it out and says, "You were wrong when you criticized your brother," or, "You shouldn't have told that lie." At that moment, there is only one thing to do. Just like the hart, with a pack of hungry wolves on his trail, remembers the water brook and goes there to slake his thirst, the child of God must remember the Lord and turn to him for help.

II. The privilege that is indicated: The point of Psalm 42 is one of access. God is available to us! When we come to the place in life that our desire for fellowship with God is as demanding as our natural desire for water, we will be transformed from the carnal to the spiritual.

The chaff of earth cannot long allure a heart that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The heavenly tug is too strong, and Jesus is too wonderful not to count fellowship with him a glorious privilege.

III. The person that is appreciated: (verse 2) "My soul thirsteth for God..." Christianity is not built upon a creed or a code or any denomination. It is built upon a person. That person is Jesus Christ. Until we know him, nothing else really matters. Notice the psalmist was not thirsting for religion, nor the church, not even the "things" of God. He was thirsting for God! God answered the psalmist's prayer, and just as surely will God meet our need today when we thirst for his presence in our lives.

Kara Blackard is pastor, Wheeler Grove (Alcorn).



Blackard

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